

Christian Formation

Holy Comforter Episcopal Church, 320 East Davis Street, Burlington, NC 27215

A letter from our newly called Rector, the Rev. Adam Shoemaker

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Special points of interest:

- Jocelyn Safrit reflects on her experience with Sunday Morning Matters
- June 5, 2011: EFM Informational Meeting
- Ryan Eubanks reflects on his experience at "The Happening."
- June 26-30: VBS

According to our Prayer Book Catechism, the mission of the Church is, "to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ ... [and this mission is carried out] through the ministry of *all* its members." (p. 855). In other words, the work of the church is up to all of us and relies upon how well prepared we all feel to boldly live out and proclaim our faith in the context of our everyday lives. This means that on-going, life-long Christian education is absolutely essential for the ministry we are called to as Christians.

It is my sincere hope that Holy Comforter can continue to grow into a com-

munity that takes this charge seriously. I pray that we may be a parish church full of life-long learners in the faith; a place where each individual is increasingly prepared to enter into his or her own relationship with God in Christ and better able to articulate that faith with others.

We are blessed in this parish to have not only a dedicated and talented Christian Formation director but also a committed group of lay leaders who all seem eager to teach and learn. I look forward to working closely with them in the coming months to review our parish's Christian

education offerings for children, youth, and adults in order to better equip each of us to live out our ministries as followers of Jesus Christ.

If you have any comments or suggestions about how we might improve our Christian education offerings at Holy Comforter, please do not hesitate to contact either Elizabeth or myself.

Blessings,

Adam +



Important Upcoming Dates for this Spring

May 8: Youth Sunday

May 15: The Chancel Drama

May 22: Last Day of Sunday School until the Fall 2011

June 26-30: Vacation Bible School

Sunday School is my favorite part of Sunday!

I try not to miss Sunday service because, when I do it feels like something is absent in my life - that feeling of being fed and "connected."

Following a service, I am more directed and at peace during the following week. This occurs on a cellular level - a core sensation that I cannot necessarily attribute to any specific part of the service. It is clearly a spiritual/emotional thing. I am fed in a very different way, however, by Christian Formation offerings. I consciously await with anticipation, the guest speakers, the group discussions, and the new ideas. I look forward

every week to intellectual stimulation and further insight into this religion that we profess. I have always enjoyed learning. Maybe that is why I have said Sunday School is my favorite part of Sunday. Sometimes I leave church with ideas that I chew on all week. Looking back I know that some opinions and facts brought out during these sessions have changed my viewpoint permanently - opening up a new understanding of some aspect of God or worship - allowing me one of those "Aha!" moments. It is definitely a brain thing. Our church provides this environment where no question is stupid, no opinion is taboo or heresy.

We learn from each others' diverse experiences and backgrounds. On occasion, we have members of the congregation share their ministry. It is delightful to learn how each of us "proclaims the Gospel and seeks the truth." We also learn from those guests outside our church family or outside our tradition. Where else could I go to get that? I am very grateful for these opportunities and I hope that more of my fellow parishioners will avail themselves of what is offered. When you come at 9:30 a.m., I'll see you in the library!

Faithfully,

Jocelyn

Sign-up now for EFM for next year!

"The lessons learned and the insights gained from EFM will stay with me forever."

-Kate Wheatly

The Education for Ministry (EFM) Year 1 group will finish up mid-June. Education for Ministry is an opportunity for people (parishioners and non-parishioners) to study, pray, and reflect on aspects of our faith. This four year series can be done in four consecutive years or one year at a time.

The four year line-up includes:

Year 1: Old Testament

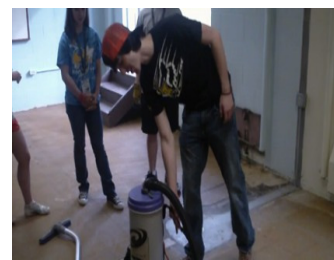
Year 2: New Testament
Year 3: Church History
Year 4: Christian Theology

A new group is scheduled to begin next Fall 2011 and will run from Labor Day to Memorial Day.

An informational meeting is scheduled for June 5, 2011 following the 10:30 a.m. service in the library. Scholarships for EFM are available.

As Kate Wheatly, an EFM group member put it, "EFM has been an invaluable opportunity to grow in faith, in intellect and in fellowship. It has deepened my biblical understanding and has given me a greater perspective on Christianity both historically and theologically. The lessons learned and the insights gained from EFM will stay with me forever."

2011 NC Diocese Youth Outreach Weekend



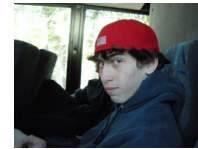
“I Happened”

Two times a year the Diocese of North Carolina holds a faith-filled weekend for the high school youth. The weekend is called, “Happenings.” I had the opportunity to attend a happening weekend last month. I cannot really talk about what we did (explain), but I can tell you it was one of the most amazing things that ever happened to me. It was a very spiritual

and emotional weekend. I literally felt as if I were reborn, I felt I grew as a person and as an Episcopalian. I can honestly say that something wonderful happened to me, something Godly. There were lots of laughs and lots of tears. When we laughed we gave hugs of joy and when we cried we got hugs of support. I made so many new friends that I know I will keep for the rest

of my life. I do feel closer to God than ever before. I suggest that every teenager attends a Happening weekend. I can truly say that on that weekend, “I Happened.”

-Ryan Eubanks



Vacation Bible School 2011!



“Caring for God’s Creations”
June 26-30, 2011



We will be learning how to nourish the wonderful things that God has blessed us with. This includes plants, family, all creatures great and small, and whatever else comes to mind in these early phases of the planning process!

We are looking for volunteers. The sooner you come forth, the better! This will be a “homegrown” VBS. The curriculum, the crafts, the lessons, the games, the music, and.....THE DRAMA (yes kids, there will be room for some young actors and actresses) will all be unique to Holy Comforter!

We want the program to be a reflection of our dear parish and hopefully speak to other children in the community.

We have a lot of exciting ideas that have already come up, but I won’t spill the beans just yet. **YOU’LL JUST HAVE TO COME AND SEE!!!**

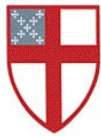
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THE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
WELCOMES YOU



May 8, 2011: Youth Sunday “Celebrating our Graduating Seniors”



Whitt Sellers



Graham Crawford



Ryan Eubanks



Shannon Whitaker

